



A new legal tool can save lives from gun violence

By Mary Leigh Blek

Gun violence prevention, supported by a resolution passed overwhelmingly at Diocesan Convention in December, is a priority for our diocese. (The resolution text is at bit.ly/1UwPrik.)

This resolution comes during a time of great opportunity for us in California. On Jan. 1, 2016 an important gun law came into effect. A remedy already existed for those adjudicated as mentally ill; however, what was missing was to help families deal with loved ones that did not fit this description. This new law establishes a process to allow immediate family members or law enforcement to petition the court to obtain a firearm restraining order when a person is at risk of injury to self or others by having a firearm.

Family members are often the first to know when a loved one is in crisis and this new tool will give them the opportunity to take action when they believe there is such heightened anger, hate, despondence, substance abuse, or a mental or emotional crisis that when combined with the possession or access to firearms would be dangerous. Prevention is the key here, and everyone's rights are safeguarded with the due process of our court system. We can give a gun back; however, we cannot give a life back!

How to obtain a firearm restraining order

An immediate family member or a law enforcement officer will be able to initiate the court process to obtain a firearm restraining order by filling out forms that are available on the internet or at the local courthouse or county law library. For more general discussion about this new law, please view the fact sheet at bit.ly/10AJctA. For more specifics, including the forms and court information, I encourage you to go to the Judicial Council Forms page at bit.ly/10AJlgF.

Now it is our collective task to create an awareness within our congregations and the general public on how to properly utilize the firearm restraining order. It is especially im-



Bishop J. Jon Bruno of the Diocese of Los Angeles and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry speak to a reporter while visiting the scene of a Dec. 2 mass shooting in San Bernardino. The bishops traveled to the site just before the beginning of Diocesan Convention on Dec. 4 to call upon people of faith and people of good will to join together to end gun violence. The following day, Dec. 5, the convention adopted a resolution calling for increased action and advocacy for gun violence prevention throughout the diocese.

portant that those who provide counsel to families with loved ones in crises, such as clergy, attorneys, school counselors, health, social service and mental health providers to be equipped to provide information about this new tool. Individuals at high risk of committing gun violence should be disqualified, at least temporarily, from purchasing and possessing firearms and ammunition.

As the mother of Matthew Blek, who was a 21-year-old victim of gun violence, I can think of no better way to honor the memory of all those needlessly lost to gun violence than to fully implement this new law. Prevention is the key to our success in ending gun violence. Please help spread the word about this life-saving tool to all who work with families in crises, and save a life!

If you would like more detailed information and regular updates on gun violence prevention, please contact me at StopGunVio@gmail.com or Virginia Classick, co-chair, Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, at 818.225.0410 or vclassick@aol.com. †

— Canon Mary Leigh Blek is a member of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force of the Diocese of Los Angeles.

All are invited to MLK service Jan. 16

The diocese's annual Martin Luther King Jr. commemoration will be held at the Cathedral Center of St. Paul, 840 Echo Park Avenue, Los Angeles at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 16. Guest preacher will be the Rt. Rev. Wayne Smith, bishop of the Diocese of Missouri. He will share his story of the Michael Brown tragedy in Ferguson, which is part of his diocese. The Program Group on Black Ministry invites all to a reception following the service.



George Wayne Smith became 10th bishop of the Diocese of Missouri in 2002. He served on former Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori's council of advice, is a member of the House of Bishops Theology Committee, and was cognate chair of the Standing Committee for Liturgy and Music at the 2015 General Convention. †

— SUNDAY, JANUARY 10 —

4:30 p.m. **Solemn Evensong & Organ Recital**
St. James' Episcopal Church
3903 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90010
Information: 213.388.3015 or saintjamesla.org

5 p.m. **Choral Evensong and Piano Recital**
Episcopal Church of the Epiphany
5450 Churchwood Drive, Oak Park 91377
Information: 818.991.4797 or tcote.org

— SATURDAY, JANUARY 16 —

10 a.m. **Ordination to the Priesthood**
ProCathedral of St. John
514 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles 90007
Information: 213.747.6285

— SUNDAY, JANUARY 17 —

4 p.m. **Timothy Howard, organ, in concert**
St. Gregory's Episcopal Church
6201 E. Willow Street, Long Beach 90815
Information: 562.420.1311

5 p.m. **Chamber Music of Craig Phillips**
All Saints Episcopal Church
504 N. Camden Drive, Beverly Hills 90210
Information: 310.275.0123

5 p.m. **Jazz Vespers: Peter Erskine Trio**
All Saints Episcopal Church
132 N. Euclid Avenue, Pasadena
Information: 626.583.2725

— THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 —

8 p.m. **The Wellesley College Choir 2016 Tour**
(Benefit for Neighborhood Youth Association)
All Saints' Episcopal Church
504 N. Camden Drive, Beverly Hills 90210
Information/Tickets: bit.ly/1mHODxH

— FRIDAY, JANUARY 22 —

8 p.m. **Chatham Baroque: Mediterranean Odyssey**
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
1031 Bienvenida Avenue, Pacific Palisades
Information: 310.454.1358

For more listings, visit www.ladiocese.org and select "Calendar" on the navigation bar.

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The 'fierce urgency of now'

By J. Jon Bruno

When President Obama spoke Tuesday morning from the White House, emphasizing the importance of new steps to reduce gun violence, he invoked Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech reference to "the fierce urgency of now."

As we know, action is clearly needed — and the time and circumstances have been urgent for the last decade at least, from the crises of Columbine to Sandy Hook to Ferguson and beyond, and then in our own region to Santa Monica, Isla Vista and San Bernardino.

As the diocesan community, we will have a strategic time to come together and engage

resolution text is at bit.ly/1UwPrik. Detailed reports of their work will follow in The Episcopal News.

In his remarks on Tuesday, President Obama put it this way: "All of us should be able to work together to find a balance that declares the rest of our rights are also important. Second Amendment rights are important, but there are other rights that we care about as well. And we have to be able to balance them, because our right to worship freely and safely — that right was denied to Christians in Charleston, South Carolina. And that was denied Jews in Kansas city, and that was denied Muslims in Chapel Hill and Sikhs in Oak Creek. They had rights too.

"Our right to peaceful assembly, that right was robbed from moviegoers in Aurora and Lafayette. Our inalienable right to life, and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, those rights were stripped from college kids in Blacksburg and Santa Barbara, and from high-schoolers in Columbine, and from first graders in Newtown. *First graders*. And from every family who never imagined that their loved one would be taken from our lives by a bullet from a gun."

For these reasons, let us devote this new year to new efforts to bring God's wisdom and peace to overcome violence-perpetuating fear and ignorance. And please do join us for the King Day observance, Jan. 16, at the Cathedral Center.

I wish you every blessing as we enter this new season of Epiphany. †



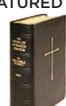
Action is clearly needed — and the time and circumstances have been urgent for the last decade at least. —J. Jon Bruno

these issues on Saturday, January 16, at 4 p.m. at the Cathedral Center for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Eucharist, where our speaker, the Bishop of Missouri, the Rt. Rev. Wayne Smith, will bring insights from the Ferguson experience within his diocese. Please come out and join Bishop Suffragan Diane Jardine Bruce and our diocesan Commission on Black Ministries as together we welcome Bishop Smith and learn from his insights.

Meanwhile, our diocesan Episcopal-Lutheran Task Force on the Prevention of Gun Violence, co-chaired by Patricia Terry of St. Cross, Hermosa Beach, and Virginia Claskie, a life-long Lutheran who worships at All Saints, Pasadena, will next meet on Jan. 28 to carry forward the action steps adopted by Diocesan Convention last month (a link to the

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